

by a lizard, *Calotes versicolor*. It was carefully captured, identified, and marked with indelible ink. Next evening it was released near the bush. The nest was again examined late in the night and found to be occupied by the same lizard. During the day the nest, which appeared to be abandoned by the owner, was always found vacant. It was only a nightly resort of the *Calotes*, which was observed living there for about a week after which it disappeared.

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY,

MAHARAJA'S COLLEGE,

JAIPUR,

May 1, 1959.

ISHWAR PRAKASH

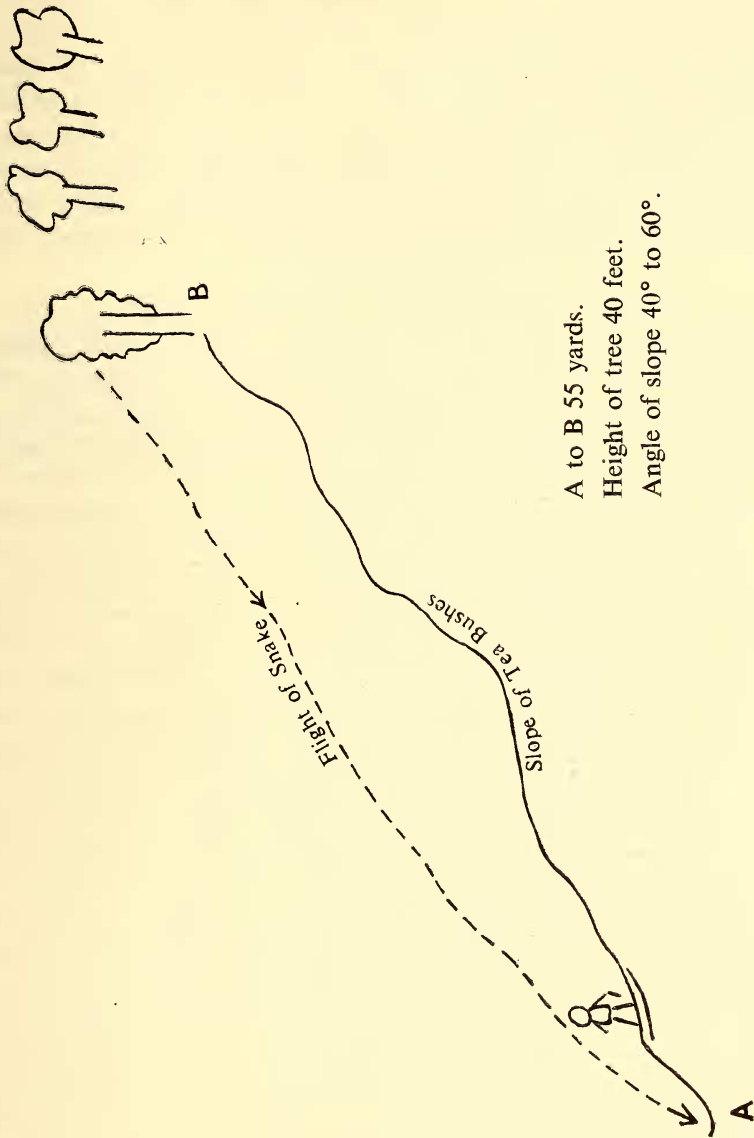
16. FLYING SNAKES

(With a text-figure)

I have to report an extraordinary occurrence which happened to me on 16th June 1959.

While walking along a path on my tea estate I saw a snake hurtling through the air towards me on a diagonal trajectory from right to left. When I first saw it, it was about 20 feet above ground level and appeared to have launched itself from a rosewood tree on the slope of 30° above me and some 50 yards away. It came with a furious swimming motion keeping itself perfectly horizontal, and as I drew back whipped past about five feet in front of me at chest level and landed below me between two tea bushes and some five yards away. It lay on a heap of weeds perfectly still, and I was able to observe that it was about 2½ feet long, thin, and coloured yellowy brown with red, black, and white markings on its back. After a few minutes I clambered down the bank to kill it but at the first blow with my stick, which landed towards its tail, it shot off into the bushes. I was unable to observe its head which was in the shadow and behind a branch.

I have never heard of a 'flying snake' or one that could launch itself such a distance and at such a height and anyhow why should it do it? On the other hand if it had been dropped by a bird of prey it would have fallen straight down and not been trajected across my line of vision?



This estate is in the South Wynaad and the average elevation is about 3000 feet.

CHEMBRA ESTATE,
CHEMBRA P.O.,
VIA MEPPADI,
MALABAR,
June 17, 1959.

K. H. VAUGHAN-ARBUCKLE